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THE ACQUISITION OF A VOCABULARY*

INTRODUCTION

The most important aim of modern language instruction is the acquisition of a reading knowledge as a means of getting, through its literature and "Realien," intimately at the spiritual life of another people. This reading knowledge is to be interpreted to mean not a stumbling translation with the help of the dictionary, such as we are wont to associate with the classics, but a fluent reading of a text in such a manner, that the meaning shall be clear from the page, as read. Now the difficulties in the way of acquiring a foreign language are roughly twofold, the difficulties of structure and the difficulties of connotation or meaning. It is safe to say that of these two types of difficulties, the former has received the most, if not exclusive, attention in modern language teaching as it is generally conducted in this country.

a) THE VARIOUS METHODS

May we now take a brief moment to go through the various methods that have been employed, to define them, and to indicate in what manner they have tried to solve the difficulties of structure and connotation. Roughly there have been and are being applied three different methods in our language instruction—a) the grammar-translation method, b) the natural method, and c) the direct method. The very name of the first defines its scope and aims. It is analytical in character. It makes a great deal of knowing the details of grammatical structure, regardless of their application very often, and it insists that the best way of getting at the connotation of the foreign language is by translation. It is generally in favor of reading much, i.e., *translating* much. The natural method, on the other hand, insists that language is imitative, that we learn to read a language as we have first an oral "Sprachgefühl," that we learn a language by repeating what others say, and that if we merely hear enough German and make sufficient attempts to repeat it accurately, the grammatical structure will take care of itself, as in the case of the child. The natural method places the stress upon the acquisition of thought content by means of mere "Vor–und Nach–sprechen." The direct method leans toward the natural method in its insistence upon the language as over against the structure, but it realizes that without a skeleton–grammar–language is bound to be a pretty immobile body, and can not in the last resort lead very far. The direct method, far from being a method without grammar, turns out to be a method with this as a very vital and necessary part. It differs from the grammar-translation method in one important aspect: for the direct method, the language and grammar form an organic unity and the latter is the means of interpreting the former. So much for definition.

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*Paper read before the Modern Language Teachers of the Central West and South at the Chicago meeting, May 4, 1918.

b) THE TYPES OF VOCABULARY

Before we can answer how these separate methods have attempted to solve the difficulties of language learning, we must again resort for a moment to definition that we may better understand the terms we shall employ in this discussion. There is a general division between an active vocabulary and a passive vocabulary. The *active* vocabulary is the vocabulary which we actively employ, either in written or oral fashion, and is consequently much more limited than the *passive* vocabulary or vocabulary that is understood or read. This holds true for the foreign language as well as for the mother tongue. Take the college student of English. To hear him speak on the campus, one would not be led to believe that he could write an acceptable theme or read Shakespeare. The fact of the matter is, that his speaking vocabulary is smaller than his writing vocabulary and this in turn again more limited than his passive vocabulary, i.e., the vocabulary which he understands, if spoken by another, or the vocabulary which he finds in his reading.

c) THE VOCABULARIES AS INTERPRETED BY THE METHODS

Now when we analyze the various methods, we must keep these divisions very clearly in mind. When the grammar-translation advocate and the direct-method advocate discuss vocabularies—if indeed they can be brought together closely enough to discuss a matter which requires such calm, dispassionate judgment—they are thinking of entirely different things. The grammar-translation advocate speaking of an active vocabulary, is by the very nature of his method confined to the idea of a written form of composition. The direct-method advocate, on the other hand, supposes the active vocabulary to include a great amount of oral work as a necessary basis for this written type. And when they speak of a passive vocabulary, the grammar-translation man is thinking of the words read, which the pupil can translate, even if he cannot use them. The direct-method man, however, means by the passive vocabulary, the ability to get a direct meaning from the text context, much as is the case in his mother tongue.

I. THE CHARACTER OF LANGUAGE*

Since this is the case, it is proposed that we analyze for a moment the psychological basis of language learning, first of all, to indicate the lines along which we should weigh the various methods; and secondly, to indicate the directions which our pedagogic efforts should take in the acquisition of a vocabulary.

a) WHAT CONSTITUTES "SPRACHGEFÜHL?"

Language is the means we use to convey ideas from one mind to another, be that by oral or written means. A sentence is the unity of thought which constitutes the state of consciousness of a given individual which he proposes to communicate to another. If the one to whom we wish to communicate this idea has had a similar training, the idea expressed in our sentence will be conveyed to him. These words spoken to a Fiji Islander, on the other hand, would be just so many sounds, which might delight him, but which he would not understand; or if they were written, would be a form of hieroglyphic, granted that he had such a concept as hieroglyphics. Now all this means that this sentence is a series of symbols which, to be understood, require a training on the part of the one, to whom we wish to communicate the idea, which is similar to our own. To express such an idea readily or fluently means that we have developed a habit. If our hearer, on the other hand, readily understands, it means that he too has formed, by constant repetition, the habit of understanding. It is a curious fact, that while the sentence contains several parts, almost universally there is the need for expressing one's self in the full sentence. A strong habit makes that feeling of unity necessary. Moreover, the smaller parts of the sentence each have a relation to one another that also is built upon a strong habit. If I say, "He came home with me yesterday," there is satisfied a feeling for proper order. Should I say, however, "He yesterday with me home came," it would at once go against the grain, so to speak, of the hearer's feeling for the proper habit. This set of habits which are different for each language, we term "Sprachgefühl."

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*The following paragraphs on the psychology of language learning are a resumé of ideas set forth in a Ms. as yet unpublished in which Prof. Karl F. Münzinger, Prof. Charles M. Purin and the writer share authorship.

b) THE DIFFERENCES OF TWO LANGUAGES

Suppose we lay aside for the moment the imitative manner in which a child acquires its "Sprachgefühl," and see what actually goes on in the mind of those who are bilingual, that is, who have a ready command of two languages. In German one says, "Er kommt mit mir nach Hause." In English one says, "He is coming home with me." Repeat these sentences several times and you will be conscious of an entirely different "Satzmelodie" in each. What is more, "is coming" is substituted for the simple "kommt," "home" takes the place of "nach Hause" and there are differences of inflection. Why is it that the translation method produces so many sentences like, "Er ist kommen nach Hause mit mir?" It is simply because the English habit is working itself through; and the student, far from being chided, should be worshipped as an example of God's inscrutable laws of habit! "Er ist kommen nach Hause mit mir" is wretched German and a person who speaks both tongues will not make such a mistake. Whynot? Because he has two sets of habits, entirely independent of one another, not hampered by translation efforts. Take another example. "He went by the house of the tailor" becomes in German "Er ging an dem Hause des Schneiders vorbei." If the student has the translation habit, he will likely say, "Er ging bei dem Haus des Schneiders." Now every German will understand him from the context probably, but he will also have the feeling of something going against the grain, in other words, a violation of a language habit. Now we are of the opinion that there are many more differences between the languages than similarities and therefore believe that reference to the mother tongue harms the making of the habit in the foreign language, in the beginning years certainly; less and less after the fundamental habits have been fixed. This is the very reverse of our usual procedure.

c) RECAPITULATION

Before we go to the next step, let us recapitulate what we have said thus far about the psychological basis of modern language learning. First of all, a sentence is the means of communicating an idea, or state of consciousness from one person to another. To have this idea expressed fluently, on the one hand, and have it readily understood, on the other, presupposes the formation of a set of similar habits in both speaker or writer and the hearer or reader as the case may be. Secondly, the sentence fulfills the feeling of satisfaction necessary in expressing a state of consciousness, and is used most often in expressing an idea, as against a word or mere phrase. Thirdly, even for similar ideas, the "Satzmelodie" in both languages is different. Fourthly, if two languages represent, as they do, two separate sets of habits, more unlike than like in so many phases of inflection, order and word-formation, it seems wise to try to avoid the stronger habit until the weaker one is formed. This means the exclusive use of the foreign idiom from the beginning and the very sparse use of the mother tongue, i.e., its use only as a last resort.

This law of habit is substantiated by William James over and over again. "Launch yourself with a strong initiative," he says. "And let no exception occur until the habit is formed;" hence the foreign idiom should be used until it is habitual. He gives one other good piece of advice. He indicates that the actual effort, the doing, the acting is what determines the making of a habit, not the talking about it. The mere intention to form a habit is, to be sure, the first step in the development of a habit, but only *self-activity*, by constant repetition, can produce the desired results. Hence we should insist on speaking the language, not analyze merely its grammatical structure.

II. MORE DETAILED ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Now let us go one step further in our quest of the psychological basis in order to determine what our pedagogic procedure should be. In a language, speech is produced by the motor activities of the speech organs which are related to muscular sensations. The complement of these active phases of speech production is speech reception. This is represented by the auditory apparatus and its sensory tract. The activities of the speech organs on the one hand represent the active, the auditory sensations the more passive receptive side of the oral language process. This is primal language or at least a modification of primal language, which is primarily a form of movement: language as it existed as a means of intercourse before the invention of any printed or carved symbols to represent certain sounds values. But language today is not merely oral, it is also written and printed. And the genius of a people is bound up in its written literature. Hence reading facility is so very important. In psychological terms then, the reading of these symbols from the printed page i.e., visual sensations, are the more passive complement to the active part which would be represented by the writing movements.

Now just what does this mean? It means that the primal factors in the speech image are articulatory and auditory sensations. It means also that in modern times this speech image is a plexus, reinforced by the kinaesthetic sensations of writing movements, on the one hand, and the visual sensations of the printed symbols, on the other. Now the criticism of modern language teaching as it is generally conducted lies in the fact that teachers have attempted to build up a reading knowledge by means of the visual sensations, reinforced by some means of writing movements and have, broadly speaking, almost wholly disregarded the most important phases of all, the active articulatory movements and the auditory receptivity that complements them, those phases which are primal in the speech image and those phases which are the most economical naturally and pedagogically in the acquisition of a permanent speech image. This means then, that in order to get the more receptive reading habit formed, we must first get an active or speaking-hearing habit formed, in order that we may lay the foundation of a known quantity—call it apperceptive mass, if you will—with which to attack the printed page.

We have now gained some further points for our general discussion. We have shown that oral work is absolutely essential at the beginning of our efforts, that this must be reinforced also by writing as an active agent to produce what we are after, namely, the more receptive feature of language acquirement as it is represented in reading power. Now on the basis of this discussion, what are we justified in saying about the pedagogic character of our efforts in the first, second, third and fourth years that shall develop this reading power? The answer to that question will be the answer to the query as to how we are to acquire a vocabulary in a foreign language.

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VOCABULARY

a) THE FIRST YEAR

Contrary to general supposition, the first year is of primal importance in laying the basis for the acquisition of a vocabulary. Just why the matter of vocabulary building should be considered the exclusive province of the later years has never been clear to me from anything that I have ever read in modern language methodology, nor substantiated by common sense. To be sure, such work in the first year must of necessity be circumscribed compared to the work of the later years, but there certainly is justification for some system of vocabulary acquirement in the first year, other than the answers given in response to questions or "Freie Reproduktion."

Since the first year is primarily the "speaking" year, that is, the year in which to fix the grammatical usage by means of oral exercises, it is obvious that intensive work in this direction is desirable. One of the best ways to fix the attention solely upon the structure, rather primarily on the structure, is to work with a limited vocabulary. The less the total number of words and the consequent more frequent repetition within a given period, the more easily assimilated they will be. But there is obviously a lower limit below which we cannot go, without approaching the ridiculous. So there arises at once the question whether one may not use some means other than those mentioned by which to acquire a vocabulary.

b) ITS SIZE

Let us first direct our attention to the problem of the size of the vocabulary. In order to get at the problem, we shall analyze, first of all, some beginners' texts from this angle. We shall label the texts A. B. C. D. and E.

A. Contains 284 standard pages,* with a German-English vocabulary of 2460 words and an English-German vocabulary of 1000.

B. Contains 234 standard pages, with a German-English vocabulary of 1200 words and an English-German vocabulary of 1100 words.

C. Contains 241 standard pages, with a German-English vocabulary of 1550 words and an English-German vocabulary of 650 words.

D. Contains 215 standard pages, with a German-English vocabulary of 1100 words and an English-German vocabulary of 380 words.

E. Contains 135 standard pages, with a German-English vocabulary of 2200 words.

Undoubtedly allowances must be made for the manner of making up a vocabulary. And allowances must be made for the fact that a text which bases its vocabulary on the cognate idea is therefore less formidable. But after all allowances are made, there seems to be a very wide disagreement as to the ideal size for a vocabulary for the first year. This variability only becomes conspicuous when we examine the figures a little more carefully.

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*A "Standard page" consist of 300 words. Vocabularies and notes are obviously excluded in the study. These figures are based upon studies made at the University of Wisconsin by Prof. Chas. M. Purin.

Is the vocabulary of "E"—2200 words—the right number (leaving out of the question whether a book for beginners should have the number of pages indicated) or is the "A" figure of 2460 (less than 300 more than the former), spread over more than twice the number of pages, the right one? And if one were obliged to use a text, containing English exercises, should one choose "A" with 1000 words, or "B" with 1100 or "C" with 650 or "D" with 380? It is understood, of course, that many other considerations enter into the choice of a textbook. But the amount of vocabulary in a given text should at least be one of the important categories for the reason given above. If "E" contains 2200 words within 135 pages, the number of new words to the page, theoretically, would be almost 16. The number of times they could reoccur in proportion to the standard page of 300 words would be about 20. On the other hand, if we take "B," we find 1200 words, or about 1000 less than "E," within 234 pages, or almost 100 pages more than "E." Applying the same process to these figures, we find that not quite 5 new words occur to the page, as compared to 16 in "E," and that the porportion of this figure to the standard page of 300 words is 60 as compared with 20 in the case of "E." In other words, the amount of repetition in the case of one book is almost three times that in the other! These data are very illuminating in view of the fact that we have emphasized repetition in the vocabulary and also the necessity for a gradual introduction of the new words. Experimental data are not yet at hand as to what an ideal vocabulary in the first year should be. But, in the absence of such data, our logic tells us that the book, containing the greater amount of repetition is the preferable one.

C) HOW SHALL WE PROCEED?

1. "ANSCHAUUNGSUNTERRICHT"

Based upon these theoretic considerations, how shall we proceed? It has already been shown that the use of the mother-tongue is undesirable in the acquisition of the new language. It is obvious that not only is it not economical, but it is an actual hindrance in the acquirement of the new mode and pattern of expression. Two languages are two separate sets of habits. Where they are spoken together and where great conscious care is not exercised, each language suffers. Each will bear the marks of the other, but neither will remain any longer a "language." In the case of English and German, there are so many positive dissimilarities of inflection, word order, idiom, etc., that reference to the English harms the making of the new habit in German, in the beginning years certainly, less and less as these more fundamental modes of expression fix themselves. It is interesting to note in this connection that the beginner who learns German by the translation method, translates words and puts them together after the pattern of his mother-tongue. Such wonderful specimens as "Er ist gehen die Strasze hinab" are points in illustration of the persistance of an older and stronger "pattern." He simply insists upon expressing himself in the line of least resistance, which he does by translating *words*. That translation doubtless has many arguments in its favor, cannot well be denied, but it is of value in direct proportion *to the number of already fixed German habits a student possesses.* In other words, it will be most useful later in the course. And then the student, *instead of translating words in terms of his own language will transfer ideas in the manner of the German itself.* So we come to the conclusion that translation at the beginning must be avoided, if at all possible.*

There must be devised, then, means of introducing the student at once into the element of the foreign language—he must learn the language in terms of itself. Now how is this to be accomplished? The answer is "Anschauungsunterricht." It is highly "desirable that the first time a new word is introduced, it be accompanied by a strong sensational experience." If we therefore present an object, or a picture of an object, or a motion simultaneously with the new word, we shall supply this strong sensational experience.

This object teaching may take one of two general directions On the one hand, it may concern itself with connecting the new foreign symbol—the new word—with an object; as a result, lays great emphasis upon the noun, the names of things. On the other hand, it concerns itself with connecting the new foreign symbol with a series of associated actions; as a result, lays great emphasis upon the verb. When these actions are brought together in a

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*The above considerations are entirely omitted in Professor Morgan's "In Defense of Translation" in *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. I, No. 7.

logical series, they resemble the Gouin Series System. The latter in its original form was not an "Anschauungsmethode." Its principle rested on the theory that one should mentally present a series of connected actions and then express them. In present practice the series system is used as object teaching, suiting the action to the word.

2. SPEAKING LEADING TO "FREIE REPRODUKTION"

By means of pronunciation, perfected in the early weeks, and the gradual introduction to the foreign sentence by means of the object teaching, described above, the student has begun to speak, in the only sense in which "speaking" is used in this paper, namely, oral practice of the foreign idiom, always with one specific end in view, whether it be the drill on some sounds, learning the gender of a series of nouns by object teaching, the formation of the present tense of verbs by a series of actions, or the development of any other grammatical principle. Speaking, as here used, refers to *oral composition, not conversation.* This very distinction between the two types of speaking, composition and conversation, is of the utmost value for the Direct Method. *It is not a conversational method at all*—it utilizes speaking merely as a means of acquiring the fundamental expressive habits which are of such prime importance in the impressive phase of the speech process—reading.

If there is in the minds of most teachers a misconception as to the elementary distinction between "conversation" and "speaking" or oral composition, there is almost as much misunderstanding of the meaning and purpose of "Freie Reproduktion." This, undoubtedly one of the very best ways of acquiring the foreign idiom, may discourage if begun too early, or fail of its purpose if attempted too ambitiously. In the beginning the correct reading (with especial emphasis on good intonation) of a particular text should be followed by "Fragen" and "Einübung" of a certain grammatical element which is prominent in the constructed text. For almost the whole of the first semester this procedure will be sufficient. Now and again a good student may be asked to give orally or in written fashion the "content" of a given "Lesestück" after preparation at home. But such work should be assigned only to the very best students. *Fluency* and *correctness* should be the standards, *not freedom of construction.* Before the student may be assumed to give *free* reproductions, it must be understood that he already has some constructions *mastered.* Otherwise the "free" rendering may lead to precisely the same errors as in translation itself, namely a tendency to follow the line of least resistance—*the pattern of the mother-tongue.* Keeping close to the text, however, helps build up a German habit. Only when the aggregate of such habits is large enough, may the student be allowed to produce a text "freely."

Toward the second semester even more students should be called upon—*after thorough preparation with "Fragen," "grammatische Einübung" and home study*—to reproduce, first orally and then in written form some of the stories. By way of parenthesis, two things should be noted here. First, it cannot do one whit of harm to have a story memorized in this way. The thing upon which the instructor should insist, however, is *fluency* and *excellent intonation.* The corrolary to that fact is that *the correction should come at the end of the story,* not in the midst of a sentence or paragraph or story. Such interruptions can only serve the purpose of disturbing the fluency and "Satzmelodie" and also the coherency of the ideas which the student is trying to express. Moreover, it will *ipso facto* discourage the student from further efforts toward attaining this fluency and intonation. If the "Fragen" have been sufficient in number and the "Einübung" sufficiently thorough and varied, one may leave the rest to take care of itself. Certainly there will be errors. To prevent them, one should prepare the ground even more carefully. But the habit of rendering a story fluently and coherently is after all of the utmost importance. The next step in the process is to suggest the rendering of a story with changes in persons, "ich" for "er," "wir" for "sie" and vice versa. It is not of as much practical value to change to the second persons "du" and "ihr." Not only are they much more difficult, they are not productive of such gains as the changes suggested above, for in reading they are comparatively easily recognized and do not occur in any such ratio as the former. Another step is to make a change in the tenses, the past or future for the present or vice versa. This can be done only after a thorough grammatical study of these tenses with many verbs.

The instructor may also, by skillful questioning, call the attention of the better students to certain changes in the way of similar phrases and turns and synonymous expressions found in previous stories. Again the warning: only for the best students!* By and by these students will of their own accord make changes, not only in the way of new constructions used in other stories, but in the very mode of expression or arrangement itself.

So at the end of the first year, the reproduction is freed only partly from the book, the better students being allowed to reproduce more freely than the others. "Freie Reproduktion" can only find its consummation in the later years. It will, however, be clear that keeping pretty close to the expressions in the book all of the first year will be the very best means, if not the only means, of acquiring a *correct* "Freie Reproduktion" later on. We may say, then, that this type of work will only then net the results expected of it, when the preparation has been thorough and when one does not expect too much too early. Here, as elsewhere, one makes haste slowly. Such a type of intensive work is of the very utmost importance in the acquisition of an active vocabulary.

3. SPECIFIC METHODS OF ACQUISITION

We now come to the specific methods of acquisition. A word is to a certain extent an abstraction. It exists primarily in an entity, in the sentence or the phrase. If this be true, then it follows that mnemonic memory must be a memory that deals with sentences or phrases. A word only then gains its true significance when it stands in relation to other words. In fact, it has now this, now that meaning, depending upon its relations. Hence to recall a word, the easiest way is to lay up a store of sentences in which it is used. Therefore it follows also that speaking—in this case that aspect of it which is represented by questions and answers and "Reproduktion"—is the very best way of acquiring a word. That is the way we learn our mother tongue, incidentally. But in the foreign idiom, we are faced with the problem of using our time more economically. There must be devised methods, which shall produce greater facility than the above alternatives. And since we are speaking of the first year, where the problem

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*Cf. in this connection the writer's "Qualitative vs. Quantitative Standards" in *Monatshefte*, Vol. XVIII, Nos. 6–7.

is one of building up an active vocabulary, they must be methods which shall utilize the sentence as a basis.

The answer to this question was given in a first year text, published several years ago, and which has influenced later books.* Every seven lessons there is a review of the words occuring in the preceding lessons. Categories are set up, which test the student's knowledge in various combinations. For example,

1. Wer (Was) ist: dick, lang, jung, alt, glatt, hoch, kurz, usw. (To bring out the nouns with the definite and indefinite articles.)
2. Wovon sind die folgenden Dinge ein Teil: der Fuszboden, der Knopf, das Wort, der Buchstabe, die Wand, usw. (To bring out the genitive.)
3. Wie ist: die Tafel, der Bleistift, ein Stuhl, der Fuszboden, ein Satz, die Kreide, die Wand, usw. (To bring out the adjectives. It should be noted that in each case there may be several adjectives.)
4. Was tut man mit: einem Bleistift, einem Stuhl, einem Buche, einem Federhalter, dem Messer, usw. (To bring out the dative.)
5. Wer (was): beiszt, fängt, tötet, friszt, iszt, greift, sieht, usw. (To bring out nouns.)
6. Wo ist: der Tisch, ein Satz, die Tafel, der Hase, der Bauer, das Pult, usw. (To bring out the dative.)
7. Was hört, sieht, fühlt, riecht, schmeckt der Mensch?
8. Was ist das Gegenteil von: dick, jung, hoch, kurz, scharf, klein, usw.

These are the first categories. All of them contain long lists of words, of which these are but the beginning. Later categories are more involved. Some are taken at random:

Wann iszt man sein Frühstück, sein Abendbrot? wann arbeitet man, schläft man?

Gebrauchen Sie folgende Ausdrücke in Sätzen: auf der Landstrasze, auf der Strasze, auf dem Hofe, am Arme, am Boden, usw.

Bilden Sie Sätze mit: sitzen, kommen, gehen, reiten, fahren.
aufstehen, sich hinlegen, hinausgehen, hineingehen, hinaufgehen, hinuntergehen, sich umdrehen.
begegnen, treffen, usw.

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*Gohdes-Buschek: *Sprach und Lesebuch.* Holt.

Vergleichen Sie die folgenden Wörter:
der Staub, staubig.
der Hof, höflich.
der Durst, durstig.
die Hitze, heisz.
die Spitze, spitz.
die Zeit, die Zeitung. usw.*

Nennen Sie ein Synonym von: sich befinden, aufheben, erscheinen, stehen bleiben, packen, usw.

Wer arbeitet: auf dem Felde, auf dem See, im Walde, in der Werkstatt.

Gebrauchen Sie mit den folgenden Verben alle möglichen Substantive. z.B. Er betrat—. Er betrat das Schloss, die (meine) Wohnung, das (sein) Haus, die Höhle, den Garten, usw.
Wir besahen—.
Hast du dir—angesehen?
Er betrachtete—. usw.

Was bedeuten die folgenden Wörter: abends, morgens, eines Tages, heute, morgen, gestern, stundenlang, usw.

The very fact that a list of words is grouped according to a certain category is valuable. The most important part of these exercises lies in the fact that they stress the learning of words in the sentence, the most economical way in the first year, and that they lay the foundation for further vocabulary study in the following years. It is true that structure is the most important consideration in the first year, but it is also true that until quite recently the first year did not concern itself with that other problem, ever before the student, the problem of connotation. Toward this, such a study, as outlined, will make its contribution.

d) THE LATER YEARS

Now how about the second, third and fourth years? In a well-planned course, the second year will contain less grammatical elements to be acquired than the first year. Even if the passive voice, the subjunctive of indirect discourse and unreal condition and the modals with dependent infinitives be developed during this second year—and, in an extended course, it is not at all necessary that all of these be developed—the essential grammatical elements of the language which will be used constantly are those of the first year. This should call our attention to two things; first of all, to the extraordinary necessity of developing a good basis in the first year; and secondly, the fact that we have proportionately less grammatical elements, should allow us during this year to pay proportionately more attention to the problem of vocabulary or connotation. And if this is true of the second, it is even truer of the later third and fourth years.

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*How much more valuable such a series of words is than the statement of rules on word-formation!

I. QUALITY VS. QUANTITY

It should be noted again that to attack any problem, the more highly developed the experience, the richer the "appreceptive mass" which one can bring to bear, the more certain is one to solve the problem. This is especially true in reading a foreign language. We must face a new page with as much experience as it is possible to muster. First of all, this means that reading should be carefully gradated. To read such a text as "Immensee" after an ordinary first year is simply pedagogic suicide. There must be a review and a transition text. But not only is it essential that we should be careful to grade the difficulty of this reading, but we must do it intensively enough and drill sufficiently upon the "constant" vocabulary to fix some elements absolutely. It is my personal opinion, based upon considerable observation in schools located in widely separated parts of the country, that we read from two to three times as much as we should. Not only do the students fail to get qualitatively results proportionate to the expenditure of time and effort, but, because of these inferior results, become disinterested at the realization of their lack of power over the foreign idiom. If we read far less than is usually suggested and follow such lines of vocabulary building as in the first year to begin with, the obvious result when one finishes a given text is that the student has mastered a certain vocabulary ever thereafter recognizable and useful to him. With this known material he attacks the next text, just a bit more difficult, and goes through a similar process, adding to his fund. But we are actually saving him time. Where under the old system a student looked up a common word perhaps 25 times, we have now taught him either a synonym, an antonym, or a derivative, or a dissection of the word into its several parts so that he will from this basis of association get at the meaning. In short, reading knowledge, like any other knowledge, can be gained only through consistent intensive work, which involves much repetition, review, and careful choice. What I have pleased to call the constant vocabulary is after all rather limited. To try to do more than this is to fail. Words which do not occur frequently should and must be avoided. I should like to add that those who insist upon gaining a reading knowledge by simply asking the student to read, read, read, still have the surprise of their pedagogic experience in store for them. Between quality and quantity there should never be any question as to the real choice.

2. DIFFERENCES IN VOCABULARY

Let us now therefore spend a brief moment with the problem involved in the second and third years. For while the vocabulary of the first year is concrete, objective, active, the vocabulary of the later years add materials which concern themselves necessarily with the more subjective and more highly involved concepts, which are for most people in any language largely part of the passive vocabulary. Now in this respect the second year is the year of transition from the vocabulary that represents the former type to that which represents the latter. But it should not be forgotten that the concrete objective vocabulary must be learned first and *absolutely learned.* It is fundamentally essential to the other. Practically every more highly involved concept can be analyzed into elements of a concrete and objective character. Vocabulary building is a matter of making haste slowly.

3. EXAMPLES OF PROCEDURE

To give you a practical illustration, let me quote first from *Geschichte und Sage.** Practically every lesson of this text contains some specific helps in the direction of vocabulary building. Each lesson also makes a great deal of the idioms which occur in the story. A thorough working over of the material

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*Gronow, A. T., *Geschichte und Sage.* Ginn.

by means of this vocabulary building and drill on idioms is absolutely essential to the later reproduction of the text.

On page 48 there is suggested a "Wiederholung" by means of "Synonym" and "Gegenteil" exercises. All these words have already been given in the vocabularies of the preceding lessons.

Wiederholung.

Was ist das Gegenteil von: Das Tal; der Tod; die Insel; der Krieg; der Norden; die Stille; die Kindheit; die Schwäche; oft; hoch; traurig; viel; hinten; hinter; lang; trocken; leicht; faul; demütig; krumm; offen; rechts; tot; aufwärts; breit; herrschen; münden; gut; den Weg finden; halb?

Geben Sie Synonyme von: da; lustig; sehr schön; sofort; einmal; wütend; einige Kinder; die Masse; jeden Tag; jedes dritte Jahr; seltsam; die See; schnell; manchmal; seit der Zeit; sehen; von jetzt an; ohne Plan; das Geschenk; sprechen; nicht sprechen; näher kommen; die Hand geben; der Platz; ein Heer schlagen; der Moment; die Idee; antworten; klarmachen; regieren; darum; die Sache macht mir Vergnügen; froh sein; immer; die Freude; das Monument; fassen; die Armee; die Schlacht.

A little later, page 54, there is another exercise, which explains itself. It should be indicated that all these words have already occurred in the material thus far read.

Wiederholung (von Stunde 1 bis hier)

1. Bilden Sie Sätze mit folgenden Wörtern; handeln; reiten; bauen; lagern; blitzen; betteln; zählen; erzählen; kleiden; tun; schlagen; helfen; ziehen; zurückkehren; schreiten; duften; heimkehren; schlafen; stellen; versprechen; teilen; mitteilen; zerstören; dunkel; schön; selten; merkwürdig; ähnlich; hoch; neblig.

2. Bilden Sie Hauptwörter aus diesen Wörtern und geben Sie deren Bedeutung.

3. Bilden Sie Sätze mit folgenden Ausdrücken; gefallen; befehlen; nachrufen; nachlaufen; bestehen aus; teilnehmen an; blicken nach; schauen nach; hinausblicken auf; vorbeilaufen an; vorbeiflieszen an; hinunterschreiten; herkommen; hingehen; hängen an; sich interessieren für; geschehen; sich nähern; nennen; bitten um; Freude haben an; warten auf; gegenüberwohnen; folgen; mitten in; mitten auf; mitten durch; glücken; gelingen; halten für; sich freuen über;

Vergnügen machen; hinaufsteigen; recht haben; verändern; sich umsehen nach; in Gang bringen; danken; denken an; suchen nach; begegnen; treffen; winken.

Or take Wildenbruch's *Das edle Blut.* These first pages contain passages so difficult that I have always found it necessary to recast them, using so far as possible, Wildenbruch's own words, but making the structure far simpler.* That will account for several passages that sound almost like the original text. Again all types of vocabulary building, thus far discussed, are illustrated. On one thing, however, I wish to place great emphasis, namely, that these stem-groups, synonyms, antonyms, and explanations are confined as far as at all possible to the words occurring in the story. This therefore intensifies the attention upon the particular material in hand, and by confining the quantity of material, helps to produce better qualitative results.

(Weil die ersten Paragraphen dieser Geschichte schwierig sind, sollen die zuerst etwas einfacher wiedergegeben werden).

Ich (der Erzähler dieser Geschichte) möchte wissen, ob es Menschen gibt, die *nicht neugierig sind* (Menschen *die ganz frei von Neugier sind*). Ich möchte wissen, ob es Menschen gibt, die hinter jemandem, der aufmerksam nach einem unbekannten Gegenstand ausschaut, vorbeigehen können, ohne neugierig zu sein, d.h., ohne dass es sie ein wenig prickelt, der Richtung seiner Augen zu folgen, um zu *erforschen* (*entdecken*), was jener Geheimnisvolles sieht.

Wenn ich (der Erzähler dieser Geschichte) gefragt würde, ob ich mich zu dieser starken Menschenart zähle, d.h., ob ich mich zu denen zähle, die frei von Neugier sind, so weiss ich nicht, ob ich ehrlicherweise mit Ja antworten könnte. Es hat einmal einen Augenblick in meinem Leben gegeben, wo es mich nicht nur geprickelt hat zu erforschen, was ein anderer Geheimnisvolles sah, sondern wo ich sogar dem Prickeln nachgegeben habe, wo ich tat, was jeder Neugierige tut.

Es gibt (*es mag* Menschen *geben; es hat einen Augenblick in meinem Leben gegeben*), mit Akkusativ, there is (are). Ich habe *dem* Prickeln nachgegeben; geben, give; die Gabe, gift; die Aufgabe, assignment.

Es gibt keine Menschen, die frei von *Neugier* sind; neugierig,

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*Cf. the writer's edition, published by Macmillan.

curious; der Neugierige, the curious one; ein Neugieriger, a curious one.

Sie *sind* nicht *imstande* vorbeizugehen—Sie können nicht vorbeigehen; der Gegenstand, object; stehen, stand.

Er sieht etwas *Geheimnisvolles* (*Rätselhaftes*); das Geheimnis, secret; heimlich, secret; unheimlich, uncanny.

Man schaut *aufmerksam* nach einem Gegenstand; die Aufmerksamkeit, attention; merken, remember; bemerken, notice; merkwürdig, noteworthy.

Ehrlicherweise musste der Erzähler nein sagen; die Ehre, honor, ehrlich, honest.

Jedenfalls hat es einen Augenblick gegeben.—*Auf alle Fälle* hat es einen Augenblick gegeben; der Fall, the case.

Nur—bloss.

Seite 2.

Der Ort (*der Platz, die Stelle*) war eine Weinstube.

Die Stube—das Zimmer; Was bedeutet die Kammer? der Raum? der Saal?

Er war Referendar am *Gericht;* der Richter, judge; recht, right; richtig, right; das Recht, justice; die Richtung, direction.

Die Weinstube lag an dem grossen Platze und zwar zu ebener Erde. Von den Fenstern der Weinstube konnte man den Platz nach allen Richtungen übersehen. Um diese Stunde war die Weinstube beinahe leer. Für mich (den Erzähler der Geschichte) war das um so angenehmer, weil ich von jeher immer ein Freund der Einsamkeit gewesen bin.

Die Stube war *leer* (*nicht voll*).

Sie war *beinahe* leer—Sie war *fast* leer.

um diese Stunde—zu dieser Zeit.

Der Erzähler war ein Freund der *Einsamkeit.*—Er wollte allein sein; einsam, lonely.

In der Weinstube waren unser drei; erstens der dicke Küfer, der mir (dem Erzähler der Geschichte) Wein (einen goldgelben Muskateller) in das Glas goss und zwar aus einer grau verstaubten Flasche; dann ich selbst—ich sass nämlich in einer Ecke des winkligen, gemütlichen Raumes—und endlich noch ein Gast. Dieser Gast hatte an einem der beiden geöffneten Fenster Platz genommen. Vor ihm auf dem Fensterbrett stand ein Pokal Rotwein. Im Munde hatte er eine lange, braun ange-

rauchte Meerschaumspitze, aus der er Dampfwolken um sich verbreitete. *Der Küfer* (*der Kellner*) war *dick* (*nicht dünn* oder *mager*).
Er goss Wein *in den Pokal* (*in das Glas*).
Der Erzähler sass in einer *Ecke* (in einem *Winkel*).
Die Flasche war *verstaubt* (*mit Staub bedeckt*, *staubig*).
Der Erzähler *schlürfte* den Wein *in sich ein*—*er trank* den Wein *sehr langsam.*
Er verbreitete *Dampfwolken* (*Qualmwolken*) um sich; die Wolke, cloud; wolkig, cloudy.

Dieser Mann hatte einen langen grauen Bart, der sein Gesicht umrahmte. Das Gesicht war etwas rötlich, stellenweise bläulich.
Er *gehörte zu der Kolonie* von alten Soldaten; hören, hear; das Gehör, sense of hearing; aufhören, stop; zuhören, listen to.
Sie hatten sich *in dem freundlichen Ort* (*in der gemütlichen Stadt*) niedergelassen.
Sie gingen *langsam* (nicht *schnell* oder *hastig*) durch die Strassen der Stadt.
Sie gingen *bedächtig* durch die Stadt; die Bedachtsamkeit, deliberation; denken, think; er *dachte an den* Mann—he thought of the man; der Gedanke, thought; gedankenlos, thoughtless; nachdenklich—in Gedanken versunken.
Demnächst—einen Augenblick später, darauf.
Seite 3.
Sie *versammelten sich*—sie kamen zusammen. Die Versammlung besteht aus Personen; sammeln, collect; die Sammlung besteht aus *Gegenständen.*
Eine Wolke *schwebte* über dem Tisch—sie *hing* über dem Tisch.
Man *vernahm* (*hörte*) die Stimmen.
Sie *unterhielten* sich über die neuesten Ereignisse.—Sie *sprachen über die* neuesten Ereignisse; die Unterhaltung, conversation, entertainment; halten, hold; behalten, keep; erhalten—bekommen, kriegen, receive; enthalten, contain; der Inhalt, contents.
Der Oberst war ein *Stammgast*—er kam täglich.
Er war eine einsame Natur—Er liebte die Einsamkeit.
Man sah ihn *selten* (nicht *oft*).
Seine *Wohnung* (*Behausung*) lag jenseits *des Stroms* (*Flusses*).
Das Wiesengelände—die Wiese+das Land—tract of meadowland.

Manchmal (*dann und wann, mitunter*), *ging* ich *an seiner Wohnung* (*Behausung*) *vorbei* (*vorüber*).
Er blickte *unverwandt* (*ohne sich zu rühren*) auf den Platz hinaus.
Der dicke Küfer war *auf das Gebaren* des Obersten *aufmerksam geworden*—Er hatte die Andacht des Obersten bemerkt.
Er *langweilte sich* mit uns; die Langweile (lange+Weile) boredom.

This, I should say, is the first step in the reading of a particular text. It ought to help interpret. After this step has been thoroughly covered, then only should there be questions based upon the chapter in question. Hereafter also should come whatever grammatical drill is found necessary. Then first should come the "Freie Reproduktion" of the material. This is undoubtedly a much more thorough process than we usually associate with our work. It is much longer, but it is absolutely the shortest way to permanent qualitative results.

CONCLUSIONS

If we return now at last to the methods which we discussed at the beginning, we shall see, I think, that the grammar-translation method, whatever advantages it has, has not sufficiently accented this very important matter of vocabulary building. Nor has the direct method in many instances made use of this, so very profitable field. The point I wish to make is that it is inherently a very vital part of the principles underlying the direct method of teaching a modern language. From the very first year on, such a direct method of procedure will do what has not been done in any large way as yet in modern language teaching—it will put into the hands of students the power to read comparatively fluently and with interest a modern foreign language. It is psychologically and pedagogically well founded, is *practically* feasible, and produces results. It involves the principle of working intensively rather than extensively. It lays the emphasis upon the quality of work done as over against the quantity accomplished.

It is, of course, impossible to do justice to a problem of such importance within the scope of this paper. But if I shall have called attention to a badly neglected phase of modern language teaching, my aim will have been accomplished.

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